

Sleeping Beauty Castle Awakens in Stunning Fashion After a 12-Month Massive Refurbishment at Disneyland Paris

After 12 months of renovation, *Sleeping Beauty Castle* has reopened to guests at Disneyland Paris, and it is more beautiful than ever. Themed tarps and scaffolds have disappeared to reveal a monument that has restored its former glory as the 30th Anniversary of Europe’s top tourist destination approaches. The celebrations of this 30th Anniversary will begin on March 6, 2022.

Although *Sleeping Beauty Castle* has already undergone several refurbishments over the past three decades, this is the first major refurbishment since its opening in 1992. The castle – which was built in accordance with Europe’s cultural heritage that inspired Disney movies – has been subject to renovation works that were as significant as those performed on historical monuments.

Tracy Eck works as Art Director, Walt Disney Imagineering Paris – Design & Show Quality. She supervised this project, in collaboration with the teams in charge of renovation works at Disneyland Paris. *“It was the first time we undertook something so monumental. Certain effects have even been improved so that the castle’s structure will be even more resilient in the upcoming years,”* she said. *“It took nearly a year to complete these works on site with all of the teams. Painters, electricians, gilders, craftspeople in charge of the tiled roofs... It was a hive of activity.”*

French Craftspeople Refurbished the Symbol of Disneyland Paris

Disneyland Paris has a long-standing history of collaborating with French and European craftspeople to build and look after the various décors of the Parks. To successfully carry out this large-scale project, while complying with the design and level of detail that make the resort’s reputation, Walt Disney Imagineering Paris – Design & Show Quality and Construction teams have called upon the services of recognized French experts in the field of historical monument refurbishment. Nine suppliers – who all came from France – were hired to perform the works, especially in terms of carpentry, roofing, painting and ironworking.

“Some of the suppliers with whom we were lucky to collaborate on this project only work on historical monuments. When they accepted this assignment, we realized that they viewed our castle as a historical monument that is a part of our heritage. It was very touching,” said Tracy Eck.

References to the French Heritage

The Imagineers who created *Sleeping Beauty Castle* have slipped in all kinds of references to France, whether they are symbolic – such as the snails covered in fine gold leaf that seem to be trying to get away from French cooks by climbing the two golden spires – or artistic, with the geometric gardens inspired by “The Lady and the Unicorn” tapestry, among other things. The symbol of Disneyland Paris is a combination between the Mont-Saint-Michel shape and that of the castles from the illustrations of the *Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry* [The Very Rich Hours of the Duke of Berry]. While the roof tile pattern is similar to that of the *Hospices de Beaune*, the dome with stained-glass windows on the Northern side of the castle is inspired by the one that sits on top of the *Château de Chambord* [Chambord Castle].

Inside, the tree-shaped twisted pillars are inspired by those that support the ambulatory of the Saint-Séverin church in Paris, and the tapestries in *La Galerie de la Belle au Bois Dormant* are authentic Aubusson tapestries, made especially for the occasion according to the traditional methods of master weavers, who benefit from a legacy that spans over 500 years.

Key Figures About *Sleeping Beauty Castle*:

- *Sleeping Beauty Castle* is 43 meters (141 feet) high.
- Its tallest tower is **16.8 meters (55 feet)** high and weighs **15 tons**.
- It took **50,000 hours** to renovate it.
- **19,900 slate tiles** were custom designed and installed on the roofs using **19,900 hooks**. As a result, **7.8 km (4.8 miles)** of slates were cut.
- **41,200 gold leaves** were applied by gilders by hand to gild certain parts of the castle.
- **Between 170 and 200 tons of scaffolding** were required to carry out these massive renovation works.
- The **fifteen tarps** that covered the scaffolds throughout the duration of the works were designed by Walt Disney Imagineering Paris – Design & Show Quality to make it possible for guests to continue to take perfect souvenir photos from Main Street, U.S.A., while being under the impression that they were in front of the real castle.
- **1,200 liters of paint** were required to paint the castle by hand.
- *Sleeping Beauty Castle's* color scheme is made up of **14 shades of pink**.
- Like all Disney castles, *Sleeping Beauty Castle* **faces north**. This ensures that the sun never passes behind the castle, allowing guests to photograph it at any time of the day from Main Street, U.S.A.
- It is the only Disney castle in the world that is home to **a dragon**, which is just one of the biggest Audio-Animatronics® characters designed by Walt Disney Imagineering. It is **24 meters (79 feet) long** and it weighs more than **2 tons**.
- Since Disneyland Paris is Europe's top tourist destination, *Sleeping Beauty Castle* is **the most visited castle in Europe!**
- A stone arch linking the western part of the Castle to *La Chaumière des Sept Nains* shop, bears the coat of arms of the Disney family. **Walt's ancestors lived in France**, in Normandy when it was conquered by English King William I, better known in France as William the Conqueror. The name Disney is derived from the village of **Isigny-sur-mer** which, by transformation would have become Isigny to be anglicized as "Disney".